

Background Paper

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**LONG TERM
EDUCATIONAL RECONSTRUCTION
IN INDIA**

By J. P. NAIK

The Indian Committee for Cultural Freedom

LONG-TERM EDUCATIONAL RECONSTRUCTION IN INDIA

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Special Features of the Next Three Plans

The next 10-15 years form the most crucial period in the history of India and the entire future of the country depends upon what happens or does not happen in this period. Since education is the most significant factor in national development, it is obvious that the entire future of the country would largely depend upon the development of Indian education during the next 10-15 years. It is, therefore, essential to take a long-term view of the problem, to prepare a perspective plan of educational development to cover the next three Plans taken together and to finalise the fourth Five Year Plan.

The Sargent Plan prepared in 1944 tried to cover a period of 40 years. Even then, it felt that it was not probably taking a sufficiently long-range view and quoted an Eastern proverb which says that if you want to produce men, plan for a hundred years. The pace of change has very greatly quickened in recent times; but nevertheless it is both possible and desirable to look at least fifteen years ahead in order to decide the direction in which our next steps are going to be taken.

What are likely to be the special features of the next three Plans? It appears that, in attempting educational development during this period, the following five special features will have to be emphasised:

(a) *Shifting of Emphasis to Qualitative Improvement*: The first fundamental need is to shift the emphasis to qualitative improvement. The last sixteen years have been a period of unprecedented expansion in Indian education and the tempo of expansion, at all levels and in all sectors of education, has

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mounted up increasingly from the post-war period (1947-50) to the first Plan (1951-56), from the first to the second (1956-61) and from the second to the third (1961-66). Consequently, the quality of education has been diluted to some extent especially because it has not been adequately emphasised at any time. The dangers of this dilution, and the possibility of still further dilution under the impact of the future expansion, have now been recognised on all hands and there is universal agreement on the view that, in the next three Plans, the emphasis will have to be shifted to qualitative improvement of education.

(b) *Continued Expansion*: This shift in emphasis does not necessarily imply a restriction on expansion. In spite of the unprecedented expansion of education which has taken place during the last fifteen years, India has become, by no means, an over-educated country. In the age-group 6-14, only 60 per cent of the children would have been enrolled in schools by the end of the third Plan. During the next fifteen years therefore, universal education would have to be provided in this age-group in order to fulfil the Directive of Article 45 of the Constitution. At the secondary stage, only 16 per cent of the children in the age-group 14-17 would have been enrolled in schools in a secondary course whose duration, by and large, would be three years. By the end of the sixth Plan, the duration of the secondary course would have to be raised to four years and the enrolments in secondary schools would have to be increased to about 40 per cent of the children in the age-group 15-18. At the university stage, the total enrolment in 1965-66 would be only 2.4 per cent of the age-group 18-23. By 1980-81, this will have to be increased to about 10 per cent of the age-group 19-24. These enrolments are, by no means, excessive when compared to the standards of education already reached in advanced countries. They are, however, the minimum essential for the industrialised modern society which we are striving to create in India. It is, therefore, evident that, during the next fifteen years, the quantitative expansion of education will have to continue, in spite of the shift in emphasis to qualitative improvement. The third Plan will thus see the close of an era of rapid expansion in which qualitative improvement was generally less emphasised. The next fifteen years will be a period when we will have to take care of quantity and quality alike.

(c) *Limitations on Financial Resources*: This simultaneous

attempt to improve quantity and quality will naturally need large financial resources. Unfortunately, the Chinese aggression has created a situation wherein a substantial portion of national resources, which would otherwise have been available for developmental programmes, would be earmarked for defence preparation. This necessarily implies limitations on the resources which the public sector can provide for education. The implication is thus obvious: we shall have to attempt a much larger task in the quantitative and qualitative improvement of education with financial resources which are not expanding quite in proportion. Would this be possible?

The first reaction to this situation is likely to be negative on the ground that the 'more and better' education we need cannot be provided without a proportionate increase in educational expenditure. Such a viewpoint, however, betrays defeatism or escapism. It would be better to consider this situation as a challenge which necessitates us to think hard, even harder than the educators of advanced countries which have fewer problems to face and ampler resources to command. We can meet this situation and perform, what superficially appears to be an impossible task, by adopting a number of devices. First and foremost, we shall have to give up the very common tendency to 'imitate' the practices of advanced countries partly because these practices do not suit our conditions and partly because no mechanical limitation can ever serve a useful purpose in the solution of social or educational problems. We will also have to restrain the common trend 'to pass on our problems to foreign experts for solution', although their advice and guidance would necessarily be of much use in our efforts to solve them. We will have to devise ways and means of supplementing public support for education, on which alone limitations are being placed by the present situation, through private sources which should be stimulated to a much greater extent than at present. We will also have to take steps to plug all causes of wastage and to devise measures to see that every *naya paisa* allocated to education goes the longest way. This implies careful planning and harder work on the part of all concerned—students, teachers and administrators. If these measures are attempted, it would be possible to achieve the difficult task of securing a simultaneous improvement in the quantity and quality of education in spite of a comparatively restricted allocation from public resources.

(d) *Relating Educational Reconstruction to Economic Growth:* The fundamental feature of the Indian scene is the appalling poverty of the people, and the most important task before the country is to raise their standard of living to a point where it becomes comparable with that in the more progressive countries of the world. This is necessarily a long-term project. But during the next 10-15 years, we shall have to develop the economy in such a way that the 'take off' stage is reached very soon, sometime before the end of the fourth Plan, and the national dividend is about doubled in 15 years—from Rs. 330 in 1961 to about Rs. 600 in 1981 (at constant prices). This would imply a supreme effort in economic development for which Indians would have to work extremely hard and deny several comforts and privileges to themselves while the friendly advanced nations will have to come forward with unstinted and more liberal assistance.

The main justification for the larger outlay on educational reconstruction which will be needed during the next 10-15 years and, especially in the fourth Plan, is the hypothesis that education is the most important single factor which leads to economic growth and that the order of economic development which we visualise would be unattainable but for the educational reconstruction that we now propose. To establish this, education would have to be geared intimately to productivity which, in its turn, depends upon the efficiency of individual workers and the adoption of modern techniques of production based on the development of science and technology.

Unfortunately, Indian education has never been properly geared to economic growth. During the British period, it was geared to several goals: the administrative need of creating a body of Indians who would help in running a modern administration; the cultural need of making Indians aware of the science and literature of the West; the desirability of changing obsolete traditional ideas and superstitions with a view to creating a modern social order; and under the impact of the Gandhian era, to the struggle for freedom. But, by and large, the co-ordination of educational development with economic growth was not contemplated, either by the British administrators or by the large body of Indian nationalists prior to 1947. The scheme of basic education was probably the first attempt in this direction. But for several reasons, it has not worked well and, at any rate, has to be reconsidered and adjusted to the needs of the industrialised

society which we are trying to create. During the last fifteen years, therefore, these traditional objectives of the educational system have largely continued to dominate the scene, and attempts to relate educational reconstruction to economic development have neither been made nor have they succeeded to any appreciable extent, except in some aspects of technical education.

The effort to co-ordinate educational reconstruction with economic growth would, therefore, have to begin on a large scale in the fourth Plan and will have to be intensified severalfold as the years pass on. The most crucial steps in this process are: the diversification and vocationalisation of the secondary course so that, by 1981, a large proportion of the children in secondary schools would be pursuing intensive vocational courses which would prepare them, not for entrance to a University as at present, but for various walks of life, especially in the industrial and agricultural sector; the development of technical and vocational education at the university stage also on similar lines; and the development of scientific, technological and industrial research. It is hardly necessary to examine these problems in detail here; and it will be readily agreed that the attempt to relate education directly to economic growth should be one of the most significant features of educational reconstruction in the next 10-15 years and especially in the fourth Plan.

(e) *Emphasis on the Human Factor:* Educational reconstruction must emphasise the human factor because, in the last analysis, the success of an educational system is to be sought for in its products, i.e., in the cultural level, professional competence and character of the men and women who come out of its portals. This aspect of the problem has received inadequate attention in the last fifteen years and we have accustomed ourselves to the evaluation of educational progress in terms of colourless statistics—the number of students enrolled at the various stages of education and the expenditure incurred thereon. It is now being increasingly realised, however, that a mere expansion of the apparatus of education is not necessarily synonymous with progress, that bad or indifferent education can lead the country to disaster and be even worse than no education, and that what the country needs is 'more and more' of 'better and better' education which would turn out, in ever increasing numbers,

competent, responsible and useful citizens who would create a richer and more just social order based on democracy.

This emphasis on the proper development of the students, in its turn, needs emphasis on two other human factors. The first of these is the teacher. We need an army of good teachers, well-informed, well-adjusted, competent and devoted to their duty. At present, the bringing up of the next generation is being left more and more to the 'lesser' representatives of the present generation—a situation which is fraught with danger to the entire future of the country. Instead of this, we have to create a situation where the bringing up of the next generation would be left more and more to the 'better' part of the present generation. This implies a very earnest consideration of all problems relating to teachers: improvement of their remuneration, provision of adequate retirement benefits, institution of welfare services, pre-service and in-service training, promotion of professional organisations to undertake programmes of academic betterment, and according them their rightful status as the builders of the greater India of tomorrow.

The second human factor is that of administrators. During the British period, the administrator of education was an alien who was generally unacquainted with, and incapable of understanding, the innermost aspirations of the people. When the struggle for freedom began and came to be supported, in increasing numbers, by the educated intelligentsia, he developed a police aspect wherein his primary responsibility was to see that education did not develop into antipathy to British rule. In the post-independence period, the administration of education has been fully Indianised; but the earlier 'police' traditions still continue to dominate, although in a different context. What is worse, the expansion and improvement of educational administration has generally been neglected, with the result that the Education Departments of today are far less equipped to deal with the immense tasks of educational reconstruction than they were at any earlier time in the past. What is needed is a substantial increase in the personnel of the Education Departments and a revolution in its character: they have to be converted from a body of 'administrators' who deal mainly with statistics, financial sanctions, grants-in-aid, transfers and appointments, and enquiries into all sorts of complaints, into an organisation of 'educationists' who would be imaginative enough to realise the

goals of educational reconstruction, sensitive enough to know the needs and demands of the people, competent enough to plan and implement satisfactory programmes of educational reconstruction and able enough to function as the friends, philosophers and guides of teachers who, in their turn, would extend a similar service to parents and students.

The body of students will also have to play its proper role in the proposed educational reconstruction side by side with the teachers and educational administrators. In the first instance, they will have to work far harder than at present. A great Indian educator has humorously observed that, in our schools, and particularly in our colleges, the vacations extend from one end of the year to another. This is a profound statement which highlights the fact that Indian students work far less than those in other advanced countries, particularly at the secondary and university stages and that their motivation leaves much to be desired. Simultaneously we will have to see that we give the students a much better deal than at present by providing better financial support and by making better provision for their residence, studies, health and welfare. These and other problems of the student world will have to receive the utmost emphasis during the next fifteen years.

Evaluation of Previous Experience and Perspective Planning :
The tasks to be faced in the fourth and subsequent Plans are thus extremely complex and difficult. Fortunately, we are in a better position to tackle them successfully. This is due mainly to the experience gained in educational planning in India during the last twenty-five years.

The idea of educational planning was first put forward by the National Planning Committee which was appointed by the Indian National Congress, as early as 1938, under the Chairmanship of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. This Committee has published a volume on *Education* which outlines the first ideas of a planned development of education in India. This was followed by the plan for *Post-War Educational Development in India*, popularly known as the Sargent Plan, which was published in 1944. It visualised, in a period of forty years (1945-85), the provision of universal education to all children in the age-group 6-14 and the development of secondary and university education on a selective and restricted basis. Although it has several technical flaws, quite understandable in a first exercise of this type, it still remains

the one and only comprehensive document on long-term educational planning in the country. Between 1947 and 1951, attempts were made to develop education somewhat on the lines indicated by the Sargent Plan ; but for several reasons, the Sargent Plan was not accepted as national policy. This would not have meant serious harm if another long-term plan had been prepared instead. But that was not done and the first Five Year Plan was prepared as a short-term plan on its own merits. This was followed by two more Plans, also prepared on the same *ad hoc* and short-term basis. As the mid-term appraisal of the third Plan has just been completed, we may be said to have practical experience of educational planning for twenty-five years and of serious implementation of educational plans for about fifteen years. Unfortunately, no systematic evaluation of this experience has been made so far. If this could be done in the next year or two, we will have very useful data on the successes and failures of our attempt to reconstruct education. These will obviously be of immense use for preparation of future plans in general and the fourth Five Year Plan in particular.

Educational planning must necessarily take a long-range view. It is, therefore, unfortunate that we have not accepted the Sargent Plan and have also not been able to produce an alternative comprehensive perspective plan for educational development in India. A suggestion to this effect was made at the beginning of the third Plan ; but it remained unimplemented. It would, therefore, be extremely worth while now to prepare a perspective plan of educational development in India between 1965-66 and 1980-81, especially as the background data for such planning are now available and to orientate the fourth Plan against the background of this perspective plan. The advantages of this exercise are obvious. But to be of immediate practical value, it must also be attempted during the next year or two.

With these preliminary observations, we may now proceed to give a broad outline of a perspective plan of educational development during the fourth, fifth and sixth Plans and to indicate, against its background, the broad outline of the fourth Plan and the major problems to be faced therein. This task may be attempted in three stages: in the first, we will deal with a few general issues which relate to all stages of education ; in the second, we will deal with the different sectors of education ; and in the third,

we will deal with a few important aspects of the problem of teachers, administration, and finance.

Objectives of Education. The first issue to be raised relates to the objectives of education and to the major educational programmes to be devised to achieve them. Some of the objectives of education are *absolute* in the sense that they are true of all countries and of all times. The 'harmonious development of the personality of a child' is, for instance, an absolute objective of education. We have concentrated far too much on such absolute concepts because they are easy to be borrowed from standard textbooks written elsewhere. It may be pointed out, however, that it is not enough to state the absolute objectives of education only. It is also necessary to supplement them by a clear statement of *topical* objectives which are true of a given country at a given time and which, therefore, vary from time to time and place to place. There is no inherent contradiction between the absolute and topical objectives. On the other hand, the topical objectives are of very great practical importance because they give 'a local habitation and a name' to what often tends to be an 'airy nothing'.

An illustration may help to clarify the point. The objective of 'national emotional integration' is obviously of paramount importance in the India of today, when the unifying forces (such as those created by the anti-imperialist struggle for freedom) have either ceased to operate or are weakening and fissiparous tendencies have come to the surface, particularly after the reorganisation of the States on a linguistic basis. The Prime Minister has observed that this objective is of such vital significance that, if it is not achieved, we will not be in a position to defend our hard-won freedom. The problem of achieving national emotional integration through education becomes, therefore, a 'topical' objective of education of the highest significance during the next ten to fifteen years. Other examples of programmes related to the attainment of significant topical objectives of education can be easily given : (1) development of values, attitudes and habits which are favourable to the stabilisation of democracy which we have adopted as a way of life ; (2) building up of moral and spiritual values in an educational system which has necessarily to be secular in character ; (3) preservation of ancient traditional values and their harmonisation with the needs of a modern social order based on science and technology ; (4) overcoming the prone-

ness to black-coated professions which has been inherent in the culture of our educated classes and to orientate our educational system to increased productivity ; and (5) elimination of such evils as rampant individualism, caste system, etc., and the creation of a new social order based on equality of opportunity and social, political and economic justice. It will readily be agreed that values of this type are of paramount importance in the present situation and have to be placed before the education system as its 'topical' objectives, and suitable programmes have to be devised for their realisation.

The question which we have to pose before ourselves is briefly this: What should be the topical objectives of education in India during the next ten to twenty years and what programmes should we devise in order to achieve them? In particular, what programmes should be taken up from this point of view in the fourth Plan ? This is an area where so much work is needed but so little has been done so far.

Content of Education. An equally important issue relates to the content of education. We live today in a highly competitive world ; and the chances of our survival and ability to make our own contribution to the life of Man depend mainly upon the competence of the men and women we are able to produce, or, in other words, on the content of the education we provide.

The educational process can be conveniently described as consisting of three inter-related programmes: (1) to give knowledge ; (2) to build up essential skills ; and (3) to develop the right attitudes, interests and values. While all these three programmes are essential for a discussion of the content of education, we shall restrict ourselves only to the first, the knowledge content of education, for reasons of convenience. But what we say about it here is obviously applicable, with even greater force, to the other two programmes.

Two significant trends are seen in the advanced countries of the world in educational development. The first is the trend to prolong the duration of education ; and the second is the trend to put more content in the same period of schooling. For instance, the duration of compulsory schooling has been increased from 6 to 8 or 9 years and attempts are being made to increase it still further to 10 or 12 years. At the same time, owing to improvement in teachers, teaching methods and equipment, children are learning more and more within a

given span of education. At the end of the eighth year of schooling, for instance, a child today learns things which were normally learnt in the ninth or the tenth year of schooling, ten or fifteen years previously, and this trend is continuously on the increase.

We are not quite sure that this is happening in all parts of India or that it is happening with sufficient speed. An historical study of the development of curricula at the different stages of education in all the States of India would throw very interesting light on this problem. By and large, however, we might say that the content of our education today does not provide adequate challenges, either to the students or to the teachers. At the elementary stage, for instance, there has been considerable improvement in the general education and training of teachers. But the content of elementary education has hardly increased in proportion. At the secondary stage, the mother-tongue has been adopted as the medium of instruction. This should have facilitated the assimilation of knowledge very considerably. But it is doubtful whether the upgrading of the curricula of secondary schools has taken adequate note of the implications of this change. Similar observations may also be made at the university stage in respect of all courses, except probably such highly specialised courses as those of Medicine, where not to keep abreast of latest developments means death. By and large, our secondary schools now teach a good deal of what should be taught at the elementary stage and the colleges teach a good deal of what should really be taught at the secondary stage. Indian education would have to be pulled out of this unhappy situation in the next fifteen years.

Dr. D. S. Kothari, Chairman of the University Grants Commission, has suggested that we should plan, not only in quantitative terms of enrolments and duration of courses, but also in the more significant terms of content. As a concrete proposal, he has suggested that, by the end of the fifth Plan, the standard to be reached at the end of the secondary stage should be equivalent to the present Intermediate and that to be reached at the end of the first degree stage, should be approximately equal to that now reached at the Master's degree. One need not be very dogmatic about any particular suggestion ; but the underlying idea of this suggestion is very clear. The content of education must be continually and consciously deepened. This is an important aspect of the problem which has

been neglected totally in all our planning so far and we must introduce it in the educational planning of the future.

It is obvious that such deepening of the content, not only in information but in skills and values, will imply considerable research in curriculum-making and in the development of newer and more efficient techniques of teaching and evaluation. It will also imply an improvement of teachers from every point of view and particularly from that of academic competence.

In this connection, a reference may specially be made to the teaching of science. This is one area where our old traditions are the weakest. In ancient India, we evolved a philosophy which shows the highest flights of imagination and provides one of the greatest measures of truth in relation to the fundamental problems of life and death. But we did not develop a scientific tradition and the development of a scientific attitude in our midst was hampered, rather than promoted, by the authoritarian traditions we cultivated. A history of education in the world shows that, at the end of the Middle ages, the conditions in East and West were more or less alike and that it is the development of science that has made the West so different from the East today. Our future development, therefore, lies in the assimilation of science and in the cultivation of a scientific attitude. The elimination of poverty, the disruption of traditions like the caste system and the modernisation of our society entirely depend upon the acceptance of modern science and technology and the building up of scientific attitudes among the public at large.

We have, therefore, to place the highest emphasis on the teaching of science at all stages. The curricula in science will, therefore, have to be revised very largely and the revision will have to be kept up almost continuously in view of the latest developments in the scientific world. The preparation of our science teachers will have to be improved in quality and increased in quantity. Scientific talent will have to be identified and provided with adequate opportunity for full development. These are programmes whose value and significance have now been accepted in principle by all concerned—the Central and State Governments, teachers and the public. What is needed is the evolution of concrete and realistic programmes of action.

Cultivation of Excellence. Another important programme of educational reconstruction is the cultivation of excellence

—the provision of the best educational opportunity possible to all talented children. It is this programme which gives a unique distinction to the Soviet system of education and to a greater or lesser degree, it is a feature of the educational systems of all the advanced countries.

In India, however, our time has been mostly taken up so far with the basic task of providing minimum educational facilities to as many children as possible and we have not been able to develop a programme for discovery of talent and for its systematic cultivation to the full.

Consequently, the bulk of the talent remains undeveloped at present for several reasons. Since the enrolment at the elementary stage is about 60 per cent of the total population in the age-group 6-14, forty per cent of the talent remains, for all practical purposes, outside the educational system. Even among the children enrolled, only twenty per cent reach class VIII and the talent among the remaining 80 per cent, who drop off on the wayside at different stages, is also unutilised. Large drop-outs occur at the secondary and collegiate stages also. It may, therefore, be said that only a small fraction of the total talent available in the country is now being exposed to educational influences.

The remedial programme is obvious. We have to make an intensive search to discover talent at all stages—elementary, secondary, and university. A far larger programme of scholarships from the middle school to the university has to be created. Measures have to be devised to bring talented students into good schools and under the influence of good teachers and, for that purpose, a continuous attempt has to be made to increase the number of good institutions. Even in the ordinary schools, teachers have to be trained to discover talented students and to help them by providing more difficult curricula and personal guidance. The provision of advanced courses which students can take at various levels, particularly at the end of elementary or secondary stages, can be a very worthwhile suggestion from this point of view. These programmes have to be taken up, on a fairly large scale, in the fourth and developed still further in the subsequent Plans.

Elementary Education. We shall now turn to the discussion of some of the more important sectors of education and begin with elementary education—an area where the magnitude of the problem is very large but its complexity is comparatively

less. There is, for instance, no difference of opinion on the goal to be reached, *viz.*, the provision of free and compulsory education for all children till the age of 14 years. The goal was to have been reached by 1960. But this did not become possible. The third Plan, therefore, suggested a revised goal, *viz.*, the provision of educational facilities for all children in the age-group 6-11 by the end of the third Plan and the extension of similar facilities to the age-group 11-14 by the end of the fifth Plan. It now appears that even this revised goal will be possible only in the States of Kerala and Madras and in the Union Territory of Delhi. The States of Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Mysore, Punjab and West Bengal, and the remaining Union Territories would be able to provide universal education in the age-group 6-11 by the end of the fourth Plan (1970-71) and it may be towards the end of the sixth Plan (1980-81) only that they would be in a position to provide similar educational facilities in the age-group 11-14. Conditions are even worse in the six States of Bihar, Jammu and Kashmir, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh which, in this respect, are usually known as the backward or less advanced States. These six States would be able to provide universal education in the age-group 6-11 by the end of the fifth Plan (1975-76) only and unless radical measures are taken to assist them, they would not be in a position to provide universal education in the age-group 11-14 earlier than the end of the seventh plan (1985-86). The provision of a minimum universal education of eight years is absolutely essential in the interest of social justice and stabilisation of democracy. It would, therefore, be suicidal to postpone the realisation of this goal, on which our Constitution has rightly placed the highest emphasis, to the seventh Plan or beyond. On the other hand, to bring it very near (*e.g.*, end of the fourth or fifth Plan) would be unrealistic; and, in view of the comparatively meagre funds likely to be available for educational development as a whole, such a step would distort priorities in other sectors of education. A realistic goal, therefore, would be to enrol all children in the age-group 6-11 and about 75 per cent of the children in the age-group 11-14 by the end of the fifth Plan (1975-76) so that the directive of Article 45 of the Constitution would be fulfilled by the end of the sixth Plan or 1980-81. It is towards this end that our attempts should now be directed.

The problem of basic education is of great significance in this

context. As early as 1949, basic education was adopted as the national pattern of education at the elementary stage. The country is thus committed to convert all elementary schools to the basic system as quickly as possible. But this programme has not proceeded well. On the one hand, only 21 per cent of the elementary schools would have been converted to the basic system by the end of the third Plan; and on the other hand, a large proportion of even the so-called basic schools are not working satisfactorily. This situation has led to a good deal of controversy in recent months. One group of thinkers concludes that basic education has failed and that the entire experiment should be scrapped. Another group is as firmly convinced as ever that the system of basic education is *the* answer to the problems of elementary education in India and pleads for a better and more vigorous implementation of the programme. In between, there is a third group which believes that the principles on which the scheme of basic education is founded are intrinsically sound and advocates a substantial modification of the scheme with a view to its universalisation in the fourth and subsequent Plans. Very probably, this would be the direction of future development. A definite decision of policy in this matter is, therefore, needed; and, whatever the decision, it will have to be vigorously implemented during the next fifteen years.

There is another point to be noted in this context. We are committed, not only to give *free and compulsory education*, but also *good education*, which would make children useful and responsible citizens. During the next three Plans, therefore, the emphasis will have to be placed, not only on the quantitative aspect of this programme but on its qualitative aspect also. For this purpose, we will have to raise the content of elementary education fairly high. A good deal of the education given in our secondary schools today is really 'elementary', and it was from this point of view that Mahatma Gandhi said that a programme of basic education should reach the Matriculation standard *minus* English *plus* craft. We have to stand by this goal, with English added.

The development of elementary education, therefore, presents several problems: (1) provision of educational facilities in small and scattered hamlets; (2) enforcement of compulsory attendance; (3) enrolment of girls and children belonging to the weaker sections of the community, particularly the tribal people; (4) reduc-

tion of wastage and stagnation in all classes and particularly in class I where it is particularly heavy; (5) preparation of elementary teachers inclusive of all problems of recruitment, general education, remuneration, service conditions, and professional training (pre- and in-service); (6) improvement in curricula, textbooks, techniques of teaching and evaluation; (7) evolving methods of teaching suited to the management of bigger classes or working under the double-shift system which is being forced on us on financial grounds; (8) modifying basic education and taking all steps necessary to make it a success; (9) improving the administration of education with special reference to the problems of Panchayati Raj Institutions which are being placed in charge of elementary education; and (10) making the school a real and effective centre in the life of the community.

Secondary Education. Secondary education has proverbially been the weakest link in Indian education. During the British period, its main objectives were two: (1) preparation of a student for university entrance, and (2) to teach the English language. A few half-hearted measures at diversification of secondary curricula and the introduction of vocational courses which would prepare students for life were made, especially after 1921, but without much success. The position has continued to be substantially the same in the post-Independence period also, in spite of the Report of the Mudaliar Commission and all that has been done so far to implement it. In fact, the position today is even worse than what it was in 1947 because of the controversies that have been raised. We do not seem to agree on any significant issue such as the age of admission to universities, the duration of the secondary course, the utility or otherwise of multipurpose schools and the programmes of vocational education at the secondary stage.

While a very great importance is attached to elementary education in the interests of social justice and as the foundation of the entire super-structure of education, secondary education is really the nation-building education. In the next fifteen years, therefore, a very high emphasis will have to be placed on the expansion and qualitative improvement of secondary education. On the quantitative side, we will have to increase the duration of the secondary course to four years—the sooner the better. We would also have to provide more facilities for secondary education, particularly in the rural areas and for girls and the weaker

sections of the community, and to raise the total enrolment in secondary schools, on a full-time or part-time basis to about 40 per cent of the age-group. We have done very little so far to provide part-time secondary education; but this is a programme which is badly needed in our present economic conditions.

It is, however, the qualitative improvement of secondary education which is of even greater significance. This has three aspects: the first is the deepening of the content of secondary education so that, by the end of the fourth (or the fifth Plan at the latest), the standard attained at the end of the secondary stage, would be almost equivalent to that of the present Intermediate. This implies better teachers, with post-graduate qualifications and improved professional training; better buildings and equipment—particularly the provision of libraries and laboratories; and a large provision of scholarships to enable talented but poor students to pursue their studies in secondary schools. It will also imply a selective approach for qualitative improvement under which a given number of secondary schools would be assisted to improve their standards every year.

The second aspect of the qualitative improvement of secondary education relates to the programme of diversification. The basis of the present-day secondary education was laid at a time when the one objective of secondary education was to prepare a student for the university. This still continues to dominate the scene and our secondary schools, still try to fit a boy to a university and in the process 'almost unfit him for everything else'. We have, therefore, to diversify the secondary course by the introduction of a large number of subjects which will prepare them for life by providing training in some vocation or the other. The most significant recent attempt made in this direction was the establishment of multipurpose schools. This programme has, however, not fared well, particularly in the absence of the right type of teachers. It is, therefore, necessary to evaluate the experiment and modify it to the extent necessary. The third Plan decided to mark time and to consolidate the existing multipurpose schools before attempting further expansion. But there is an urgent need to evaluate the consolidation (if any) that has taken place and to decide the future line of action in the fourth and subsequent Plans.

The third aspect of improvement is large-scale vocationalisation. The number of students who attend vocational courses

at the secondary stage in India is probably the lowest in the world. In West Germany, for instance, about 70 per cent of the students at the secondary stage follow vocational courses which prepare them for life. In Japan, this percentage is about 60. The position in most of the advanced and industrialised countries is the same. But in India, only 12 per cent of the students, enrolled at the second level of education, follow vocational courses. Our programmes of rapid industrialisation are being held up for want of 'middle level' personnel which only the vocational secondary schools can produce. During the next three Plans, therefore, the proportion of students at the second level of education who take to vocational courses will have to be increased to at least 40 per cent. Since the vocational schools are generally costlier to equip and maintain, this programme of vocationalisation has large implications in the preparation of teachers and in the provision of funds.

The problem of examination reform looms large at the secondary stage. At the elementary stage, there are no compulsory external examinations. But the School Leaving Certificate Examination, held at the end of the secondary stage, presents several problems. It may probably be worthwhile to take courage in both hands and abolish the external examinations at the end of the secondary course just as we have abolished them at the elementary stage. But this is just not practicable; and the only realistic programme to be adopted is one of a gradual reform from within. The Evaluation Unit in the National Council of Educational Research and Training is trying to tackle this problem, mainly through the in-service education of teachers. But it has not been able to produce any impact as such on the secondary school leaving examination system. This is very largely an administrative and organisational problem; and it will have to be tackled vigorously in the fourth and subsequent Plans.

Higher Education. The main directions in which higher education in India will have to be developed during the next 10-15 years have now been generally recognised, thanks to the very useful work done in this sector by Dr. D. S. Kothari, the Chairman of the University Grants Commission. It is now agreed that, at the university stage, the highest emphasis has to be on the improvement of quality. At this level, there are no State barriers or even international barriers. Our best colleges

or university departments have, therefore, to be on a par with their counterparts in any part of the world. This can only be done by selecting institutions where there is a good potential for growth and helping them to reach the highest efficiency possible. It is from this point of view that the University Grants Commission put forward its scheme of 'advanced centres of learning'. This is making good progress in the third Plan and will have to be developed very largely during the fourth and subsequent Plans. On the same basis, we shall also have to develop a scheme under which a few individual colleges are selected every year and assisted to improve their standards to as high a level as possible.

Expansion of facilities at the university stage also is badly needed. The enrolment at the university stage at the end of the second Plan was only 1.8 per cent of the age-group 17-23 and this is expected to rise to only 2.4 per cent of the corresponding age-group at the end of the third Plan. This is much lower than the standards already reached in the advanced countries of the West. It is, therefore, felt that, by the end of the sixth Plan, the enrolment at the university stage should reach about 10 per cent of the corresponding age-group.

The third proposal of reform is to change the composition of the student body at the university stage very considerably. At present, the possibility of a student availing himself of university education depends more upon the purse of his parents than upon his own talents. Consequently, we have a twofold wastage: a large number of gifted students who ought to be in the universities are not there, due mainly to financial reasons; and, on the other hand, a large number of students who ought not to be there, have been enrolled for the simple reason that they could afford the expenditure involved.

During the next 10-15 years, this picture will have to be considerably changed through a process of selection and scholarships. The talented students will have to be discovered even at the elementary stage and helped to go on to the secondary stage. The best students at the secondary stage would have to be again discovered and assisted, through a liberal programme of scholarships, to proceed on to the degree course; and the best students at the degree course would have to be helped further to go in for the post-graduate or research degrees. Today, only about 15 per cent of the students at the university stage get some form of

scholarship aid which is often inadequate. This proportion will have to be substantially increased and, by the end of the fifth Plan, we will have to provide scholarships to about half the students at the degree level and to about 80 per cent of the students at the post-graduate level so that the most talented group of students in the country, irrespective of caste, sex or religion, is admitted to the privilege of higher education.

During the next 10-15 years, special emphasis would also have to be laid on the maintenance of the highest standards, combined with very rapid expansion, at the post-graduate stage. Our expansion of collegiate and secondary education is now so rapid, in comparison with that at the post-graduate stage, that it is becoming almost impossible to get good teachers for secondary schools and colleges, even by raising the salaries to an appreciable extent. In many places, second-class degree holders are appointed to posts where a first-class degree is essential; and when even second-class degree holders are not available, third-class degree holders are perforce selected. Consequently, the standards at the collegiate level are going down and this, in its turn, is affecting the standards in secondary schools. It is, therefore, realised that the key to qualitative improvement of education is a very large expansion of the post-graduate stage simultaneously with an improvement in its standards. It is only this measure which will provide us the teachers with whose assistance we can expand collegiate and secondary education, without diluting quality, on the scale that is contemplated at present. The significance of this programme is, therefore, obvious and, as it is the first step in the whole series, it will have to be taken up on a very large scale in the fourth Plan itself.

One of the most controversial issues in university education at present refers to the medium of instruction. In the past, the use of English as medium of instruction did not create major problems at the university stage because there was a great emphasis on the teaching of English at the secondary stage and the students came to the university with a fairly good command over the language. Since 1947, the emphasis on the teaching of English at the secondary stage has been reduced very considerably with the result that the average student, who now enters the university, is not in a position to follow the lectures in English or to read English books with fluency and pleasure. The natural consequence of this policy at the secondary stage would, there-

fore, be to adopt the modern Indian languages as media of instruction at the university stage also. Steps towards this end are being taken and a number of universities have permitted the teaching of certain subjects in the modern Indian languages and have also allowed students to answer examination papers in their mother-tongue. But progress is slow for want of a suitable terminology and textbooks in the Indian languages.

It is inevitable that, sooner or later, the regional languages will have to be adopted as the media of instruction at the university stage and it may, therefore, be desirable to prepare an intensive and phased programme for the change-over and to plan to reach this goal, by and large, by 1981. During the next fifteen years, therefore, the greatest emphasis would have to be laid on the production of an adequate number of textbooks and other standard works in all the modern Indian languages so that the standards at the university stage would not deteriorate. This would be an immense programme of action which would need both talent and money.

As the regional languages gradually become the media of instruction in the Indian universities and are simultaneously adopted in the administration of the States concerned, the problem of a link-language—a common language in which Indians from different parts of the country could communicate with each other—would arise. Obviously the first link-language would be Hindi which has been declared to be the official language of the Indian Union. During the next fifteen years, intensive steps would have to be taken to develop Hindi on the lines which have been initiated in the first three Plans and it would have to be given its due status as the official language. At the same time, efforts would have to be intensified to popularise Hindi in the non-Hindi speaking States.

But India also needs another link-language—English—which would provide it, not only with a common channel of communication amongst Indians, but also with a 'window on the world'. Without a good knowledge of English, attainment of high standards at the university stage is not at all possible. English has also become a world language and a good knowledge of English is essential for every educated Indian. Steps will, therefore, have to be taken to intensively cultivate the study of English also. At present, there are various practices to teach English at the school stage. These will have to be examined on the basis of

sound research and a good system of teaching English at the school stage would have to be devised. At the university stage also, an intensive study of English as a language would have to be made compulsory. Most important of all, adequate provision would have to be made to create 'nurseries' for preparing the necessary number of teachers of English literature in colleges and of English language in schools and colleges. For this purpose, we will have to encourage and maintain some schools which would begin the teaching of English very early and also establish training institutions where a four-year course in the English language is integrated with elements of pedagogy.

There is another point which deserves notice. In the interests of national integration, it is necessary to have an elite which would come from all parts of the country but which would be educated in common educational institutions. One good proposal to this end would be to establish National Universities which would adopt Hindi and English as media of instruction. In universities where English is the medium of instruction, the study of Hindi should be compulsory and *vice versa*. These universities should all be financed by the Central Government and should maintain the highest standards possible. They should provide scholarships to most of their students who should be selected on a competitive basis from all parts of the country, a quota on population basis being allocated to each State. A beginning may be made with a few National Universities. But ultimately, there should be a National University in every State. Apart from producing an elite which would bind the whole country together, these universities would also spur the other universities on to ever-increasing heights of excellence.

Research is one of the most important functions of the universities and development of research in education, humanities, science and technology should be one of the highest priorities during the next fifteen years. In India, very little expenditure is incurred on this sector at present. It is, however, well to remember that the future development of education, culture and industry in the country depends very largely on the quality and quantity of the research that we would be able to develop in our universities and other research institutions.

Social Education. One of the greatest weaknesses in the first three Plans has been the neglect of social education. Prior to 1947, the general thinking was that intensive efforts to liquidate illiter-

acy and to educate the masses on proper lines would be undertaken in the post-independence period. But, by and large, these hopes did not materialise. A few attempts to organise mass literacy campaigns were made, particularly in Madhya Pradesh and Bihar, but these did not last long enough, nor did they spread to other areas. Neither Government nor the voluntary organisations devoted themselves earnestly to the task of organising mass campaigns for literacy. A new and a useful concept of social education (which included literacy and went much beyond) was evolved; but it was not possible to expand the programme of social education also. These deficiencies would have to be made up during the next 10-15 years and social education (including the liquidation of adult illiteracy) would have to be given a very high priority.

The problem of mass education is essentially one of motivation and organisation. Massive campaigns of liquidating illiteracy can be successful only if two conditions are satisfied. The first is the generation of a strong mass enthusiasm for a better life, through intensive and nation-wide programmes of extension education. Such programmes would create a mass thirst for literacy. The second condition, therefore, is the creation of an adequate machinery and satisfactory techniques to satisfy this mass thirst when it is once generated. The experience of countries like USSR which has liquidated its illiteracy in a short time could be of very good use to us in this endeavour.

The programmes of social education have also to be developed. The most important group of population on which such a programme should make an impact is that of rural adults, most of whom are agriculturists. It is on the vitalization of this group that the future of development of the economy very largely depends. But it is this group which has been neglected so far and on which even the community development programme has failed to make an adequate impact. The social education movement must address itself mainly to this group during the next 10-15 years. It should deal with a number of vital problems, such as national integration, development of new scientific attitudes, family planning, increasing production, improvement of agriculture, development of rural industries, health and nutrition, care of mothers and children, understanding the implications of development, developing attitudes of hard work, restricting consumption, and understanding responsibilities and duties of a

citizen. The more concrete and vital this programme is, the more effective would the movement be.

Other Programmes. Pre-primary education is another neglected area. What is needed here is a scientific study of our pre-school children; the evolution of a good course of pre-school education—the situation is rather chaotic today because a number of schemes and programmes are simultaneously in operation, *i.e.*, the Montessori, Kindergarten, nursery or pre-basic and all sorts of combinations of these systems, the training of pre-primary teachers; the evolution of a simple programme of pre-primary education which would suit rural areas and which could be organised through local women whose educational attainments are not high; and the organisation of pre-primary schools on a large scale—the enrolment of 10-15 per cent of the children in the age-group 3-6 being a good target to be reached by the end of the sixth Plan.

A similarly neglected area is the education of the handicapped children. The present facilities available are far too meagre. A good target to be reached by 1981 would be to establish one school of a fair size for the blind and the deaf in each district and the provision of one school for the orthopaedically and mentally handicapped in conjunction with each medical school or college. Experiments will also have to be made to educate handicapped children in ordinary schools by providing some special facilities—an experiment which obviously has a great future by reason of the reduction of costs it secures.

The education of the backward classes, particularly the tribals, poses several difficult problems, such as, study of tribal cultures or preparation of textbooks and instruction of teachers in tribal languages. The nomadic and erstwhile criminal tribes pose another group of difficult problems.

Teachers. We may now turn to the problems of personnel which would have to be tackled in the next 10-15 years, and especially in the fourth Five Year Plan. These cover mainly the teachers and the administrators.

In respect of teachers, a number of problems need attention. The first and the foremost is the question of their scales of pay. During the last three Plans, the salaries of teachers in universities have been improved considerably and one may even say, satisfactorily. But the problem of teachers in the affiliated colleges—and these form the vast majority of teachers at the university stage—is

yet far from being solved. At the secondary stage, salaries leave much to be desired and the problem is still worse at the elementary stage. It is essential to take a comprehensive view of the problem and to revise the scales of pay of teachers at all levels in accordance with some broad principles among which two are most important: (1) There should be as little gap as possible (or preferably no gap at all) between the remuneration offered to teachers and the persons with similar qualifications and responsibilities in other walks of life; and (2) the trend should be to raise the salaries at lower levels to a greater extent so that the existing wide gap between teachers of different levels tends to be bridged. A high level National Committee may have to be appointed to examine this issue.

The teachers have demanded that there should be uniform scales of pay for the country as a whole. It may not be possible to meet this demand and scales of pay will continue to vary from State to State. We should, however, take steps to see that the salaries of teachers will not fall below prescribed levels in any state and that, within the same State, there should be no variation of salaries according to managements and that all teachers of a given category would draw the same scale of pay irrespective of the agency under which they happen to serve—Central Government, State Governments, local bodies or private organisations. At present, there are wide variations, even within a State, in the scales of pay given to a category of teachers under different managements. This position will have to be righted as soon as practicable.

In particular, special attention has to be paid to the problem of equalising the dearness allowance paid to teachers working under different categories. In some States, the dearness allowance payable to a category of teachers remains constant, irrespective of the management under which they happen to work. In others, the dearness allowance varies considerably from management to management. For instance, the primary teachers working under local bodies in Bihar get a dearness allowance which is less by about Rs. 20 p.m. than that paid to Government servants drawing the same salary. This is a very invidious discrimination and should be ended as early as possible.

The problem of the old-age provision of teachers is not yet satisfactorily solved. The ideal solution would be for all teachers to get the same type of old-age provision, irrespective of the management under which they might happen to serve. Even if this is not possible, the minimum we should expect is that every

teacher, serving under any management whatsoever, should be entitled at least to the triple-benefit scheme under which he would draw pension at a certain rate, subscribe to a contributory provident fund and also have his life insured for a specific sum. Such a provision has been made for all teachers in some States, for example, Madras. It is necessary to extend the scheme to teachers in other States also. It is the teachers under private organisations who have the poorest provision for old age. It is necessary to extend the benefits of such a scheme to them at an early date.

The concept of welfare services for teachers has not yet been developed so far. It would be essential to take up this idea during the next three Plans and particularly in the fourth Plan. Under this proposal, welfare services would be provided for teachers and cover such matters as health or accident insurance, assistance for education of children, travel grants, etc. The total funds required for the programme may be raised on a contributory basis—the teachers contributing an amount of about one-and-half to two per cent of their salaries and Government contributing an equal amount. The total funds so available should be administered on a district basis through committees consisting of the representatives of teachers and of the Education Department. The professional organisations of teachers would be particularly useful in establishing and running these welfare services. This is a very important programme which should be begun with the fourth Plan and developed fully in the fourth and the fifth Plans.

Adequate provision is also necessary for the pre-service and in-service training of teachers. At the pre-service stage, we need expansion of existing facilities and improvement in quality. At the in-service stage, we have hardly any programme worth the name at present, although it is in-service training that gives the best results in qualitative improvement. It is, therefore, necessary to provide regular in-service training for all teachers on such a basis that every teacher would get about three months' in-service training in every five years of service. A fairly large beginning in this direction should be made in the fourth Five Year Plan and the programme completed in the fifth and the sixth Plans.

There is very little literature on educational subjects in the modern Indian languages. This prevents the teachers, who do not know English, from improving their professional competence. Steps have, therefore, to be taken to produce this literature in all

the modern Indian languages as soon as possible. The best talent in the nation should be harnessed for writing books on different aspects of educational problems and these should then be published in all the Indian languages. A fairly large programme to this end will have to be taken up in the fourth Plan and developed extensively through the National Council of Educational Research and Training at the Centre and the Institutes of Education in the States.

A teacher is always a learner in the first instance. We have already referred to the programmes of in-service training and production of educational literature which would have to be developed to stimulate and keep up his learning. In addition, steps would have to be taken to provide facilities and incentives to teachers to improve their subject knowledge and professional competence continuously. The provision of correspondence courses, grant of study leave, grant of increments for attaining higher levels of competence, etc., will have to be made. Concrete proposals for the implementation of these programmes would have to be devised in the fourth Plan.

The organisations of teachers are not functioning very satisfactorily at present. They mainly concentrate on the economic aspect of the profession, namely, improvement in remuneration and service conditions. While this is legitimate, it is also desirable that these associations should be induced and assisted to organise programmes for improving the professional competence of teachers. All improvement is self-improvement, and the best incentives for professional improvement are provided when these programmes are organised by or through teachers' associations.

Educational Administrators. With regard to educational administrators the first problem is that of increasing the strength—and this has been referred to earlier. The other main problem to be tackled is that of training—pre-service and in-service.

Courses in educational administration are now provided, as a part of the M. Ed. degree course, in a number of universities. But there are two major problems. The content of these courses needs improvement. Educational administration cannot be separated from general administration and personnel management; but adequate provision for these courses is hardly made at present. There is also no adequate provision for practi-

cal training. The quality of training also leaves a good deal to be desired, especially because the staff does not often have practical experience of educational administration. Devising more meaningful and intensive courses of pre-service training for educational administrators are, therefore, very urgently needed.

Even more important is the problem of in-service training of educational administrators. There is hardly any provision for this at present. A beginning is proposed to be made with the State Institutes of Education. These would have to be developed fully to perform this difficult task in the fourth Plan.

There is hardly any research conducted at present in problems of educational administration. Unsatisfactory as our planning is, its implementation is even more defective. The improvement of administrative practices is, therefore, very essential. In this connection, the experience of U. S. A. would be of great value to us. Since there were 48 States in U. S. A., each with its own form of educational administration, the first step taken was to make comparative studies of administrative practices in the different States. These studies naturally led to a discussion of their similarities and dissimilarities and their advantages and disadvantages. Where necessary, detailed studies were also undertaken to examine the strength and weakness of a given practice and to ascertain the manner in which it could be improved. It is out of such discussions and researches that the science of educational administration was gradually built up. A similar development should and can be made to take place in India also.

Finance. In the first Plan, the total outlay on general education was Rs. 1,330 million. It increased to Rs. 2,080 million in the second Plan and to Rs. 4,180 million in the third Plan. It must be pointed out, however, that the proportion of the outlay on general education to total outlay on all sectors has remained fairly constant, at about 6-7 per cent, in all the three Plans and that the larger amounts provided are merely the result of an increase in the size of the Plan as a whole. Moreover, even at the end of the second Plan, we were spending only about 2.3 per cent of our national income on education. This may increase to about 3 per cent at the most by the end of the third Plan.

Two changes are needed in the policies pursued in the first three Plans. The first is to accord a high priority to educational

development which would imply an allocation of more than 7 per cent in the total Plan. The second is to make a definite attempt to increase the total expenditure on education. Japan, it may be pointed out, spends about 6 per cent of its national income on education. U. S. A. and U. K. spend about 4 to 5 per cent. UNESCO has suggested that the developing countries should increase their expenditure on education to at least 4 per cent of their national income as early as possible and that they should increase it to about 6 per cent in a phased programme spread over 10-15 years. In so far as India is concerned, we should make an attempt to increase our educational expenditure to at least 4 per cent of the national income by the end of the fourth Plan. In a further period of ten years, it may be increased to about 6 per cent.

Two other important problems have to be faced in the financing of education. The first is the problem of priorities. In the first three Plans, we have tried to do something of everything and spread the available resources very thinly over a large area. We should seriously examine whether this policy should be continued. It might be better, in the fourth and subsequent Plans, to highlight a few programmes of the utmost significance and to develop them fully, leaving the others to private and community enterprise of the people themselves. Unfortunately, very little thinking has been done in India so far on this problem of priorities.

The second problem is that of supplementing the public support for education. This may be done in several different ways as indicated below:

(1) The local communities, through powers of increasing local taxation on land and buildings, can make a much larger contribution to the development of elementary education than they do at present. Any increase in the land taxes at the State level has become politically inconvenient and impossible. Probably, these sources could be exploited better at the local level, if the additional resources could be earmarked for local benefits such as those in the field of elementary education.

(2) We should develop a *school improvement programme* on the lines of the Madras State. Here, an intensive effort is made to take the elementary schools closer to the people and to seek assistance from the public for such programmes as construction of buildings, provision of equipment and ancillary services like

school meals. So far, Madras has collected about Rs. 550 million through private contributions for the improvement of elementary education. Programmes of this type should be organised in all parts of the country in the fourth Plan; and the preparatory work for them should be done in the remaining two years of the third Plan.

(3) At the secondary and collegiate stages, we should seriously examine the question of increasing fees. We should have an adequate provision of free studentships and scholarships for the gifted children. But it is not these gifted children that are swelling the secondary schools and colleges at present. While we cannot stop the rush of mediocre or even less than mediocre children in secondary schools and colleges, there is hardly any point in spending hard-earned public funds on their education. We, should, therefore, make them pay for their secondary and higher education, if they desire to have it, through a fairly substantial raising of fees.

(4) At the university stage, we should have a scheme of loan scholarships only. The university students would start earning in three or four years and there is no reason why they should not get a loan scholarship and pay for their own higher education.

This proposal needs some elaboration. In this context, it is suggested that we should establish a National Scholarships Corporation of India on the lines of the LIC Corporation. Every student, who gets more than a prescribed percentage of marks in the examination of the secondary school (or in his B. A. or M. A. examination) should be entitled to get a loan scholarship for higher studies. The amount of the scholarship should be adequate to meet his expenses. This loan should be repaid by him in 15 yearly instalments which would begin one year after he gets employment and starts earning, and there should be a statutory provision for collection of instalments, through deduction of his salary, on the lines of the Income Tax Act. The amount of repayment should be proportionate to his income. In other words, those who get less than a certain income (say, Rs. 150) would not repay it at all. Others would repay it at a certain percentage of their monthly salary; the rate of repaying, rising with an increase in salary. No student, however, should be required to pay more than twice the amount that he has borrowed. On actuarial basis, it may be possible to decide the

contribution of each person for the repayment of this loan on the basis of his annual or monthly earnings after employment. In short, what is proposed here is an inverted educational insurance policy. A prudent father nowadays takes out an educational insurance policy for his child as soon as he is born. He pays the prescribed premia for 15 years and finds that he has, at his disposal, a sum which would enable him to give a college education to his child as soon as he attains the age of 16. What is proposed here is exactly the same. But instead of making the parent take the educational insurance policy, it is suggested that the student himself should be made responsible to take it out in an inverted fashion, that is to say, the payments of the policy should be made in the first three to six years and the premia for it should be recovered in the succeeding 15 years.

It is suggested that, right from now, serious thinking should be undertaken on two lines: (1) raising of the maximum resources possible in the public sector by according a higher priority to education than it has received in the first three Plans; and (2) devising ways and means to supplement the public sector resources through contributions of local bodies, local communities and the parents. It is only this combined approach that would help us to go the longest way.

Centre-State Relationship: If all this large-scale and qualitative development of education is to be attempted in the next three Plans, two fundamental issues arise. The first refers to the relationship between the Centre and the States. Under the Constitutional provisions as they stand at present, education is essentially a responsibility of the State, and the Centre has a very limited role to play. In actual practice, however, the Centre has gone much beyond its Constitutional role and a working partnership has been evolved between the Centre and the States in the last three Plans. The present position is, however, extremely anomalous. In the first place, it does not give adequate initiative and authority to the Centre. Secondly, the State Governments are in a very unfavourable position to take a long-term view of educational development because they are subject to immediate pressures from several quarters. It would, therefore, be essential to review the Centre-State relationship in education and to make education a concurrent subject.

The second issue relates to Central grant-in-aid. At present, the Central sector in education is extremely small. The Cen-

trally sponsored sector (*i.e.*, the sector where funds are provided by the Centre but implementation is done by the States in accordance with a commonly evolved policy) was fairly large till the end of the second Plan. But it has now been reduced to the minimum in the third Plan and experience has shown that this has been a very unfortunate decision. The State sector is the largest and is assisted by the Centre to a substantial extent. But owing to the weakness in the Constitutional position, the Centre does not even come to know how its grants are being actually utilised in practice until it is too late and it is also totally helpless to take any remedial measures even in cases where a misuse or a misdirection has come to its notice. Moreover, the Central grants are now given for 'developmental' expenditure only and the entire committed expenditure is the responsibility of the States. This system is defective to a very large extent and, if educational development is to be stepped up, steps will have to be taken to provide Central grants for educational expenditure as a whole—both committed and developmental. Under the present conditions, the expanding and elastic resources are mostly vested in the Centre. Education, which is a State responsibility, cannot make any headway unless ever-increasing and large financial allocations are given. It follows, therefore, that a long-term educational development of the type contemplated here is possible only if the system of grant-in-aid from the Centre to the States is completely recast and the Central and the Centrally-sponsored sectors in education are substantially expanded.